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ABSTRACT

This module, which may be used as the basis for a workshop or as a special topic unit in an adult basic education or English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) course, focuses on-the-job health and safety concerns and standards in the United States. The following items are included: module overview; list of basic, thinking, interpersonal, information utilization, and other skills addressed in the module; teaching points (points regarding understanding California's workplace safety standards, weighing the benefits of employment against the health hazards of specific jobs, and understanding workers' rights); sample learning activities; list of print resources and commercial ESL textbooks; sample lesson plan; transparency masters; learning activities and student handouts; pre- and postmodule student surveys; and scoring directions. The following objectives are addressed in the module lesson: inquire about safety signs and equipment and their purpose; report an unsafe condition; work with others to address a problem; and complete a job accident report. Included in the lesson plan are the following: objectives, description of the target audience and context, room setup guidelines, lists of items needed and media used, and detailed instructions for conducting the lesson. (MN)

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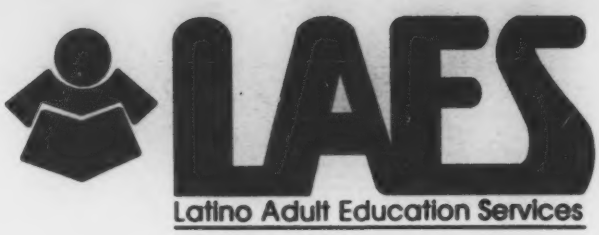

Tierra de Oportunidad

MODULE 4

On The Job Health And Safety

Ed Kissam and Holda Dorsey

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INSTRUCTIONAL AREA
Advancing Work and Career

MODULE 4
On the Job Health and Safety

Overview

Immigrant workers are employed in some of the most hazardous occupations in the United States. Construction and farmwork, for example, are two occupations where many immigrants work which have very high rates of occupational injuries. On-the-job safety and health concerns are, an important instructional priority, particularly because some of the occupational health risks facing immigrants, for example, exposure to toxic materials -- are unfamiliar ones.

The U.S. legal system is structured quite differently than the Mexican system and is a complex one -- difficult not only for workers but, also, for attorneys to understand fully. The laws governing workplace safety are changing rapidly and will continue to change.

Even informally employed workers like domestic workers have most of the same rights as other workers.

Workers must be responsible for working as safely as possible and for protecting their own health, but, at times, they may be required by their supervisors to undertake tasks that are dangerous to their health. While almost anyone who works has, at some time or another, decided to accept an assignment that posed some risks to their health, such choices should, at least, be informed ones.

Workers who report safety violations to Cal-OSHA (the California Occupational Safety and Health Program) are guaranteed immunity from retaliation but such guarantees require time before an unjustly laid off worker's problem is remedied, e.g., by being awarded back pay. They also require that the worker whose rights have been violated actively cooperate with the government in securing redress.

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Basic Skills Development

This curriculum module serves to build several basic, generic skills. It will be useful for the instructor to emphasize to the class how the module and the class activities contribute to these skills.

Basic Skills	understanding both simple on-the-job safety materials and more complex ones such as posters informing workers of their rights, understanding the consequences of accidents on the job, awareness of safety manuals and company safety policies, introduction to the concept of probability for assessing risks and estimating potential costs of injury; securing oral information from others, asking for explanations (from co-workers, supervisors), persuading co-workers to work more safely, teamwork in joining with others to improve workplace safety, negotiating with supervisors to improve workplace safety;
Thinking Skills	knowing how to learn, understanding the function of government-mandated notices, learning from the experience of others, learning as part of a team, learning about taking advantage of specialized learning opportunities, such as insurance-supported safety seminars;
Personal Qualities	self-esteem recognizing one's ability to pro-actively manage risks at work and work collaboratively with co-workers, supervisors, and employers to minimize them, self-management and integrity, distinguishing short-term and long-term consequences of decisions and actions;
Using Resources	relying on sources of information in the workplace, including the personal experience and knowledge of co-workers and supervisors;
Interpersonal Skills	communicating tactfully to persuade other workers to work more carefully, negotiating tradeoffs between safety and productivity with supervisors, teamwork with others to improve on the job safety;

Using Information	acquiring, managing, and comparing information from "official" and "unofficial" sources, interpreting technical legal notices in their general outlines, basic information on workers' rights;
Working with Systems	understanding the concepts of responsibilities, liabilities, government mandates to employers, understanding how legal processes affect workplace safety and workers' ability to make good on their rights;
11. Using Technology	technology is not an emphasis in this module but World-wide web resources can be used at the instructors' option to explore issues such as different kinds of occupational illnesses.

Teaching Points

1. California employers are required by law to post standard posters where they can be easily read by all workers on key worker rights. One required poster, Safety and Health Protection on the Job, describes workers' rights and the CAL-OSHA program, administered by the California Department of Industrial Relations Workers who have difficulty in reading and understanding these posters should, whenever they have a chance, ask co-workers or friends to explain to them what the poster says. In principle, supervisors are responsible for explaining safe work procedures; in practice, workers should get talk to whoever can help them work safer.

2. Companies are responsible for maintaining a safe workplace. However workers should pay attention to their own well-being and the well-being of their co-workers on the job. All California companies must have specific workplace safety policies and a designated person to be responsible for them. Although it is the employers' responsibility to provide employees a safe workplace, workers can and should contribute by working carefully, and helping other workers be careful on the job (e.g. explaining how to use machines safely, reminding co-workers to be careful of their backs). No one wins when an employee is injured on the job. From a practical perspective, in the adversarial legal system, there will often (but not always) be a good deal of attention to whether a worker who has been injured on the job was responsible or negligent, what they could have done to avoid an accident, who should be blamed, or what the company could have done to decrease the risk of accidents. Most insurance companies now give employers lower

Workers' Compensation rates when their accident rates go down and some give special training on decreasing workplace risks.

3. Workers should weigh the benefits of being employed against the health hazards of the work. Jobs held by immigrants are some of the more dangerous in the society. While an injured worker may simply be out of work for a day or for a few weeks, it is sometimes possible to have chronic health problems which last for years or for the rest of one's life. While the U.S. has a multitude of laws designed to protect workers from injuries or occupational health problems, most are difficult to enforce and workers who complain about working conditions cannot be absolutely certain their rights will be upheld. Balancing immediate survival needs against long-term concerns is difficult but most workers choose one approach or another. It is useful for them to be prepared to think about this analytically.

4. Many on the job hazards are invisible. Exposure to toxic materials is often invisible. Farmworkers are exposed to pesticides in many different ways and should seek to inform themselves as fully as possible about pesticide hazards. They should know that fields treated with pesticides must post a re-entry date indicating when it is safe to enter the field. Industrial workers may be exposed to other dangerous toxic materials such as lead or solvents. California has a number of worker right-to-know provisions requiring employers to inform their employees about the dangers on the job, but workers must ultimately bear the responsibility of making sure their health is not affected. Workers who think they have been exposed to pesticides should do whatever they can to document what their exposure was. Pregnant women may have special risks from exposure to materials that may hurt the fetus.

5. Workers have the right to refuse to do a job that threatens them with injury or which seriously jeopardizes their health. Workers who complain about safety hazards on the job are likely to be threatened with dismissal by their employers. Many will, if they continue to complain, be fired. However, the law protects workers from retaliation, but only if the employer has violated occupational health regulations and workers who are fired because they have complained may receive back wages. These cases are not always easy. A worker should think carefully, about how serious the danger is, before complaining. Workers should explore other options, such as looking for a new job, or negotiating a transfer to a different task.

6. Psychological stress is an invisible but real health danger. Workers' wellness involves not only physical health but, also, psychological health. Being treated unfairly, unjustly, or being constantly "pushed" to work faster

can result in real health problems. Workers should weigh the necessity of stressful jobs or jobs where they are treated badly against the income they earn from these jobs. There have been cases where workers have "taken advantage of the system" by claiming they had stress-related health problems that were not real. This does not mean that stress-related health problems do not exist, but it does mean that workers who have genuine stress-related health problems need to be systematic in recognizing stress, in trying to minimize the stresses of their job, in seeking qualified help, and in documenting the problems they are experiencing.

7. There are several programs providing support for workers who have been injured on the job. An important benefit is Workers' Compensation that provides for medical treatment of on the job injuries, rehabilitation services to recover, retraining for permanently disabled workers, and, in the case of a worker's death, some limited support to their family. Disability Insurance provides support when a worker is incapacitated by illness or injury for a period of several months. Vocational rehabilitation services are another source of help with the medical costs of a serious disability or for retraining.

8. Farmworkers have special rights to protect them from some problems of on-the-job safety in this very dangerous work environment. These rights include:

Workers' compensation coverage from a grower who has hired a farm labor contractor even if the labor contractor is not covered -- "joint liability". (Workers needing to deal with this issue will probably need to seek assistance from a legal services program).

The ability to sue under AWPA (the Agricultural Workers' Protection Act) even, for example, if they were injured while being transported to a job.

A new bill under consideration by the California legislature may insure that workers employed by labor contractors can hold the primary employer, e.g., the grower responsible, for complying with labor laws such as minimum wage and overtime.

9. Teamwork and cooperation is an important part of avoiding on the job injuries and workers standing up for their rights when someone is injured. Workers should share information on job safety with their co-workers or ask their co-workers about the hazards of their jobs. Solutions that have worked well at some companies are for employers to let workers set up safety committees to find ways to make their work safer. One good reason to learn

to read is to read safety signs. Injured workers may have difficulty in getting the kind of help they need. They should be prepared to spend a good deal of time in standing up for their rights. The best preparation for dealing with this type of issue is being informed and being clear in describing and documenting what has happened when a problem occurs. Free legal advice and assistance are available from legal services groups.

10. Immigrants Have the Same Rights as Other Workers. They cannot be assigned more dangerous jobs, given worse safety equipment, assigned tasks such as pesticide application for which they are not qualified because they are immigrants or because they are not documented.

Sample Learning Activities

1. Survey the class orally to see how many have been out of work due to an on-the-job injury or illness -- in the last three months, in the last six months, or in the last year? Estimate lost earnings from disability. How many workers were covered or not covered?

2. Survey who in the class has applied for Workers' Compensation and what their experience was. If people who were hurt on the job did not apply, why was that? Have the class discuss possible strategies that might or might not have helped.

3. Role play scenarios of workers in different job situations and family situations deciding whether to complain about conditions at work, e.g., a woman on her own who is the sole support of her children, a couple where both husband and wife are working, a couple who has two children in school, and a couple with pre-school children.

4. Ask class participants to role play workers talking to their supervisors about hazardous work conditions. Explore what are effective and ineffective ways to negotiate with employers about safety?

5. Have a class discussion on injuries from drinking on the job. Does anyone know of anyone who had an injury from drinking on the job? Does the class think this is an important issue or not?

6. Discuss the pressures which make workers work without taking safety precautions, e.g., usually the pressure to go faster to keep up with others in a work crew, to not seem "chicken", or the need to show off.

7. Calculate with the class lifetime earnings lost, if a worker cannot work at all, and if a worker can only work half time.

8. Invite a vocational rehabilitation counselor to talk to the class about minimizing injuries and about the workers' compensation system.

9. Invite a farmworker health clinic physician to the class to talk about pesticide safety and special hazards to pregnant women.

10. Discuss stress as a particular form of on the job hazard.

11. Invite local legislators to talk about their positions on pending legislation that will affect workers' rights. Encourage questions from the class.

12. Ask pairs of class participants to role play a worker trying to convince a co-workers to work more safely on the job even though they don't want to (e.g. wear protective goggles working with an electric saw, wear protective clothing

13. Invite an "applicant's attorney" who represents workers seeking Worker's Compensation and an attorney representing either employers or Workers' Compensation insurance carrier to class to talk about their diverging views on the fairness of the Workers' Compensation system and how workers are treated by it.

14. Assign class participants to small groups of 4-5 persons to work together to read, discuss, and understand the language of the mandatory Safety and Health Protection on the Job poster. Have each of the groups report back to the class and compare whether they all understood the poster the same way.

15. If Internet access is available to the class, ask the class to explore resources which provide more information about on-the-job safety and health.

16. Have the class compare and contrast the kinds of on-the-job safety policies where each work. How many who think their employer has no on-the-job safety policy feel they know for sure their employer has no policy? Why do class participants think that some employers can seemingly operate in violation of the Cal-OSHA requirement to have a company plan? Subsequently, invite a representative from the Department of Industrial Relations to explain to the class why there are apparent discrepancies.

17. Have the class practice filling out a sample job accident report. What can class participants learn about the legal system covering on-the-job safety from the sample form?

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Resources

Farmworker Job Safety Cards (Texas Rural Legal Assistance)

Poster – Safety and Health Protection on the Job (practice reading)

Poster - Notice of Workers' Compensation Carrier (practice reading)

U.S. Department of Labor On-line Resource: OSHA Web Page

http://www.osha-slc.gov/OshDoc/Directive_data/DIRECT_19890814A.html

United Farm Workers (UFW)
www.latinoweb.com/ufw/

Commercial ESL Textbooks

- All Sides of the Issue, Longman
- ESL for Action, Addison-Wesley
  Unit 6, Acting for Health and Safety
- Reader's Choice, Book 3: Discoveries, Contemporary Books
  Lesson 8, Accident!
- The Working Culture, Career Development for New Americans, Book 2,
  Prentice Hall Regents
  Part 3, Economic and Legal Awareness: Chapter 12, Laws That Protect Workers
- Workplace Dynamics, SLRC Library
  Unit 1, No Excuses
- Workskills, Book 2, Prentice Hall Regents
  Unit 3, Safety
  Book and Audiotape
- Work-Wise, Tactics for Job Success, Contemporary Books
  Unit 9, Protecting Your Rights
- Your First Job, Prentice-Hall
  Unit 8, Safety First

04. JOB HEALTH & SAFETY

OBJECTIVES
Students will be able to:

- inquire about safety signs and equipment and their purpose;
- report an unsafe condition;
- work with others to address a problem;
- complete a job accident report.

LEARNERS & CONTEXT
Adult students. Average ability of the group is medium. The range of ability is wide. Motivation is high. Group size is between 11 and 30. There are many learners whose English is limited.

ROOM SETUP
Chairs and small tables to facilitate pair or small group work

TO BRING
Handouts, scissors, glue, transparencies, realia and accident form.

TO DO AHEAD
Pictures
3 x 5 cards
Accident report forms
Handouts

MEDIA USED
Overhead

STEPS
Introduction
Presentation
Practice
Matching
Reporting
Role Play
Break
Reading
An accident report
Fill in a form
Evaluation
Closure

Lesson Plan: 04. Job Health & Safety

	Introduction	Teacher shows pictures of various safety garments and devices, e.g., goggles, gloves, hard hat, boots, and apron.
(10 min)	*Motivation* *• Evoke Mystery*	Teacher asks students if they know why these items are used.
	pictures	
	Presentation	Teacher states objectives shown on transparency; You will be able to:
(8 min)	*Information Preview* *• State Objectives Informally*	• inquire about safety signs and equipment and their purpose; • report an unsafe condition; • work with others to address a problem; • complete a job accident report.
	overhead	You will also practice: * reference skills (getting information from others); * communication skills (interacting with employer); * teamwork skills (working with others to address a problem).
	Practice	Using a picture of a hard hat, the teacher asks students: What is this?
(15 min)	*Practice & Feedback* *• Drill*	Why is it needed? When is it needed?
	pictures	Using a picture of a sign, the theacher asks the students: What is this sign? What does it say? What does it mean?
		Students at random volunteer the answers. Teacher repeats the correct answers.
		Teacher distributes pictures of safety signs or items, one picture per student, and instructs the students to walk around the room asking and responding to questions using "What?, Why?, When?"
	Matching	Teacher gives each pair of students a page with pictures of safety signs and a page with possible problems.
(20 min)	*Practice & Feedback* *• Group Practice - Indep.*	Students in pairs work together cutting and pasting to match safety signs with specific situation.
	scissors and glue	Students report to the group what safety sign was used for each situation.

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Lesson Plan: 04. Job Health & Safety

	Reporting *(20 min)* *Practice & Feedback* • *Brainstorming*	Students in groups of four select an unsafe situation, analyze it, develop a solution, study the implications of the solution.
	Role Play *(20 min)* *Practice & Feedback* • *Role Play*	Students prepare a role play to report the unsafe condition and potential solutions to a supervisor. Students act out their role play for the class.
	Break *(15 min)* *Other* • *Administration*	Teacher instructs the students to stretch and return pictures to the teacher's desk while teacher takes care of attendance and other paperwork.
	Reading *(20 min)* *Information Acquisition* • *Inquiry - Group* *reading & q*	Teacher hands out the reading and question sheet. Teacher assigns each team a question to study, discuss, and reply. Students work in teams of four locating relevant information in their reading passage, discussing the situation, and responding to the assigned question.

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Lesson Plan: 04. Job Health & Safety

	An accident report	Teacher walks the students through an accident report form, asking questions such as:
(10 min)	*Information Preview* *• Instructor Pre-Questions*	Where do you write your name? Where do you describe the accident? Who has to sign the form?
	overhead	
	Fill in a form	Students in pairs fill in an accident report form describing the accident in the 3 x 5 card.
(20 min)	*Practice & Feedback* *• Simulation*	
	accident form	
	Evaluation	Teacher restates the objectives: You are able to:
(12 min)	*Other* *• Session Evaluation*	• inquire about safety signs and equipment and their purpose; • report an unsafe condition; • work with others to address a problem; • complete a job accident report.
	overhead	
		You also practiced: * reference skills (getting information from others); * communication skills (interacting with employer); * teamwork skills (working with others to address a problem).
		Students complete a questionnaire reviewing the objectives and evaluating the lesson.
	Closure	Students reflect on what they have learned and tell the group what was new to them.
(10 min)	*Closure* *• Reflection*	

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On The Job Safety

Objectives

You will be able to:

inquire about safety signs and equipment and their purpose;

report an unsafe condition;

work with others to address a problem;

complete a job accident report.

You will also practice:

* **reference skills (getting information from others);**
* **communication skills (interacting with employer);**
* **teamwork skills (working with others to solve problems).**

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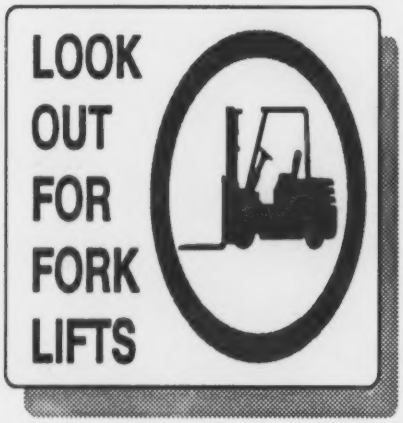
Electrical Hazard

FLAMMABLE


LOOK
OUT
FOR
FORK
LIFTS

DANGER
FLAMMABLE
POISON

DANGER

CAUTION
Corrosive
Avoid Contact

Tom needs to visit a construction site. What should he wear?	Luz works where there is a lot of noise. What does she need?
Joe uses a machine to sharpen metal. What does he need to wear?	Angie has to carry some pieces of glass. What should she wear?
There are a lot of gases where Maria works. What should she wear?	There are many chemicals stored in the shed. What sign should be posted?

Julio tells Ramón that he can not put the paint cans by the heater. Why?	Rafael tell Marta that she has to wear gloves when working with some liquids. Why?
Margo tells Poncho to wear boots at work, specially when cleaning the floors. Why?	Sal tells Pedro that he can not smoke next to those cans. Why?
Sandra tells Ed to walk down the yellow lines. Why?	Gloria tells Ana not to plug in the vacuum cleaner in that outlet. Why?

State of California

EMPLOYER'S REPORT OF OCCUPATIONAL INJURY OR ILLNESS

Please complete in quadruplicate (type, if possible). Mail three copies to:

HCM
Horiz Claim Management
870 S. RAYMOND AVE.
PASADENA, CALIFORNIA 91105
(818) 585-3000

OSHA Case No. _____

☐ Fatality

Any person who makes or causes to be made any knowingly false or fraudulent material statement or material representation for the purpose of obtaining or denying workers' compensation benefits or payments is guilty of a felony.

NOTICE: California law requires employers to report within five days of knowledge every occupational injury or illness which results in lost time beyond the date of the incident *OR* requires medical treatment beyond first aid. If an employee subsequently dies as a result of a previously reported injury or illness, the employer must file within five days of knowledge an amended report indicating death. In addition, every serious injury/illness, or death must be reported immediately by telephone or telegraph to the nearest office of the California Division of Occupational Safety and Health.

EMPLOYER

1. FIRM NAME | 1A. POLICY NUMBER | DO NOT USE THIS COLUMN

2. MAILING ADDRESS (Number and Street, City, ZIP) | 2A. PHONE NUMBER | Case No

3. LOCATION, IF DIFFERENT FROM MAILING ADDRESS (Number and Street, City, ZIP) | 3A. LOCATION CODE | Ownership

4. NATURE OF BUSINESS, e.g., painting contractor, wholesale grocer, sawmill, hotel, etc. | 5. STATE UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE ACCT. NO. | Industry

6. TYPE OF EMPLOYER ☐ PRIVATE ☐ STATE ☐ CITY ☐ COUNTY ☐ SCHOOL DIST. ☐ OTHER GOVERNMENT - SPECIFY _____ | Occupation

EMPLOYEE

7. EMPLOYEE NAME | 8. SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER | 9. DATE OF BIRTH (mm dd yy) | Sex

10. HOME ADDRESS (Number and Street, City, ZIP) | 10A. PHONE NUMBER | Age

11. SEX ☐ MALE ☐ FEMALE | 12. OCCUPATION (Regular job title—NO initials, abbreviations or numbers) | 13. DATE OF HIRE (mm dd yy) | Daily hours

14. EMPLOYEE USUALLY WORKS ____ hours per day ____ days per week ____ total weekly hours | 14A. EMPLOYMENT STATUS (check applicable status at time of injury) ____ regular full-time ____ part-time ____ temporary ____ seasonal | 14B. Under what class code of your policy were wages assigned? | Days per week

15. GROSS WAGES/SALARY $ _____ per _____ | 16. OTHER PAYMENTS NOT REPORTED AS WAGES/SALARY (e.g. tips, meals, lodging, overtime bonuses, etc.)? ☐ YES. $ _____ per _____ ☐ NO | Weekly hours

17. DATE OF INJURY OR ONSET OF ILLNESS (mm dd yy) | 18. TIME INJURY/ILLNESS OCCURRED _____ A.M. _____ P.M. | 19. TIME EMPLOYEE BEGAN WORK _____ A.M. _____ P.M. | 20. IF EMPLOYEE DIED, DATE OF DEATH (mm dd yy) | Weekly wage

INJURY OR ILLNESS

21. UNABLE TO WORK FOR AT LEAST ONE FULL DAY AFTER DATE OF INJURY? ☐ YES ☐ NO | 22. DATE LAST WORKED (mm dd yy) | 23. DATE RETURNED TO WORK (mm dd yy) | 24. IF STILL OFF WORK, CHECK THIS BOX ☐ | County

25. PAID FULL WAGES FOR DAY OF INJURY OR LAST DAY WORKED? ☐ YES ☐ NO | 26. SALARY BEING CONTINUED? ☐ YES ☐ NO | 27. DATE OF EMPLOYER'S KNOWLEDGE NOTICE OF INJURY/ILLNESS (mm dd yy) | 28. DATE EMPLOYEE WAS PROVIDED EMPLOYEE CLAIM FORM (mm dd yy) | Nature of injury

29. SPECIFIC INJURY/ILLNESS AND PART OF BODY AFFECTED, MEDICAL DIAGNOSIS, if available, e.g., second degree burns on right arm, tendonitis of left elbow, lead poisoning | Part of body

30. LOCATION WHERE EVENT OR EXPOSURE OCCURRED (Number, Street, City) | 30A. COUNTY | 30B. ON EMPLOYER'S PREMISES? ☐ YES ☐ NO | Source

31. DEPARTMENT WHERE EVENT OR EXPOSURE OCCURRED, e.g., shipping department, machine shop | 32. OTHER WORKERS INJURED/ILL IN THIS EVENT? ☐ YES ☐ NO | Event

33. EQUIPMENT, MATERIALS AND CHEMICALS THE EMPLOYEE WAS USING WHEN EVENT OR EXPOSURE OCCURRED, e.g., acetylene, welding torch, farm tractor, scaffold | Sec. Source

34. SPECIFIC ACTIVITY THE EMPLOYEE WAS PERFORMING WHEN EVENT OR EXPOSURE OCCURRED, e.g., welding seams of metal forms, loading boxes onto truck | Extent of injury

35. HOW INJURY/ILLNESS OCCURRED. DESCRIBE SEQUENCE OF EVENTS. SPECIFY OBJECT OR EXPOSURE WHICH DIRECTLY PRODUCED THE INJURY/ILLNESS. e.g., worker stepped back to inspect work and slipped on scrap material. As he fell, he brushed against fresh weld, and burned right hand. USE SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

36. NAME AND ADDRESS OF PHYSICIAN (Number and Street, City, ZIP) | 36A. PHONE NUMBER

37. IF HOSPITALIZED AS AN INPATIENT, NAME AND ADDRESS OF HOSPITAL (Number and Street, City, ZIP) | 37A. PHONE NUMBER

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Completed by (type or print)	Signature	Title	Date
	21		

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READING

Workers should compare the benefits of being employed against the health hazards of their work. Many jobs are very dangerous. Sometimes an injured worker may be out of work for a day or for a few weeks. Sometimes a worker may get chronic health problems that last for years.

The U.S. has many laws designed to protect workers from injuries or occupational health problems, but these laws are difficult to enforce and workers who complain about their working conditions cannot be sure that their rights will be upheld. It is useful for workers to start comparing immediate survival needs against long-term occupational plans.

Workers have the right to refuse to do a job that threatens them with injury or which seriously jeopardizes their health. Some workers who complain about safety hazards on the job might be threatened with dismissal by their employers. Many are fired, if they continue to complain.

If the employer has violated occupational health regulations, the law protects workers from retaliation, and a worker who is fired because they have complained may receive back wages. These cases are not always easy and workers should think carefully about how serious the danger is. Workers should think of other options, such as looking for a new job, or negotiation, e.g., being transferred to a different task.

Many on-the-job-hazards are invisible. Exposure to toxic materials, for example, is often invisible. Farmworkers are exposed to pesticides in many different ways and should learn as much as possible about pesticide hazards. They should know also that fields treated with pesticides must have posted signs with a re-entry date when it is safe to enter the field.

Industrial workers may be exposed to toxic materials such as lead or solvents that are dangerous. California has a number of worker right-to-know provisions requiring employers to inform their employees about the dangers on the job but it is workers' responsibility to make sure their health is not affected.

Workers who think they have been exposed to pesticides or other toxic materials should do whatever they can to document the exposure. Pregnant women may have special risks from exposure to materials that may hurt the unborn child.

Psychological stress is an invisible but real health danger. Workers' wellness involves not only physical health but, also, psychological health. Being treated unfairly, unjustly, or being constantly pushed to work faster can result in real health problems. Workers should weigh the necessity of stressful jobs or jobs where they are treated badly against the income they earn from these jobs.

There have been cases where workers have "taken advantage of the system" by claiming they had stress-related health problems that were not real. This does not mean that those problems don't exist but it means that workers who have a genuine stress-related health problem need to be consistent in recognizing stress, in trying to reduce the stresses of their job, in getting qualified help, and in documenting the problems they are experiencing.

There are several programs providing support for workers who have been injured on the job. An important benefit is Workers' Compensation that provides for medical treatment of on-the-job injuries, rehabilitation services to recover, retraining for permanently disabled workers, and, in the case of a worker's death, some limited support to their family. Disability Insurance provides support when a worker is incapacitated by illness or injury for a period of several months. Vocational rehabilitation services are another source of help with the medical costs of a serious disability or for retraining.

Farmworkers have special rights to protect them from some problems of on-the-job safety. These rights include: Workers' compensation coverage from a grower who has hired a farm labor contractor even if the labor contractor is not covered -- "joint liability". This right is currently very complex legally and any affected worker will probably need help from a legal services program. The ability to sue under the Agricultural Workers' Protection Act, even, for example, if they were injured while being transported to a job.

Immigrants have the same rights as other workers. They cannot be assigned more dangerous jobs, given worse safety equipment, assigned tasks, such as pesticide application, for which they are not qualified because they are immigrants or because they are not documented.

Workers should share information on job safety with their co-workers or ask their co-workers about the hazards of their jobs. Some companies have let workers set up safety committees to find ways to make their work safer and prevent injuries.

The best preparation for dealing with this issue is to be informed and to be clear in describing and documenting what has happened if there is a problem.

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Student: Please work with your team in answering these questions.

- Why is it useful for workers to compare a job that covers their immediate needs against long-term occupational plans?
- Under what circumstances can a worker refuse to do a job? What might be the consequences of refusing?
- What does "invisible job hazard" mean?
- What can cause a psychological stress? How can it be documented?
- What programs can provide support to an injured worker?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of sharing information with co-workers?
- Who is responsible to make sure that their health is not affected?

LAES

On The Job Health & Safety

Student Self- Evaluation

Please mark each sentence according to your own comfort with the information. Number 1 is the lowest, number 5 is the highest.

I can:	no				yes
inquire about safety equipment	1	2	3	4	5
ask about safety signs and their meaning	1	2	3	4	5
report an unsafe condition	1	2	3	4	5
work with coworkers in correcting an unsafe situation	1	2	3	4	5
complete a job accident report	1	2	3	4	5

I feel comfortable:	no				yes
acquiring information from others	1	2	3	4	5
negotiating with others to solve problems	1	2	3	4	5
communicating ideas to the supervisor	1	2	3	4	5

LAES

Date: _____

Student Name _____

Teacher Name _____

Student Survey
"On the Job Health and Safety"

1. How confident that you have all the information you need about:

	For each line, Please check the box that applies to you			
	Not Very Confident	A Little Confident	Quite Confident	Know all I need to know
a. your rights if your employer fires you or retaliates against you for reporting unsafe working conditions				
b. the benefits available to workers who are injured on the job or whose health is hurt as a result of working conditions– Workers' Compensation				
c. what an injury is, including both visible and invisible conditions—what Workers' Compensation covers				
d. when and how to report an accident to your employer				
e. the benefits available to workers who are injured so badly that they can't work or whose health suffers as a result of work – Disability Insurance				
f. whether people who complain about the psychological stresses of their jobs have a real health and safety concern or not				
g. whether farmworkers have the same rights as other workers if they're injured on the job or being taken to a job site				
h. the information employers have to post at work about workers' rights to on-the-job health and safety				
i. to recognize safety and hazard signs				
j. whether you can refuse to do a dangerous job				

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2. How confident are you that you can:

	For each line, Please check the box that applies to you			
	Not Confident	A Little Confident	Very Confident	Don't need this
a. Ask the questions you need to in order to find out about the risks involved with a job				
b. Estimate the costs of medical treatment for the kinds of injuries you might experience in your job				
c. Fill out an accident report for your employer or an insurance agency				
d. Find out from your employer about whether you are covered by health insurance and what the coverage means for you				
e. Talk with employers and supervisors to help you get your medical bills paid for on-the-job injuries				
f. Talk with co-workers to identify job safety problems and what to do about them				

3. Please help advise Elisa, by reading the information she provides and answering the questions below it.

Background: Elisa has often complained to her fellow workers about the piles of boxes in shipping that appeared dangerous to her. She mentioned it to her supervisor as well, but her supervisor told her that if she was careful nothing would happen; that they had been like that for a long time and nothing bad had happened yet. Yesterday, while Elisa was working a pile of the boxes did fall, and Elisa hurt her hand. Her supervisor says it's because she wasn't careful; that it's just sprained and she should forget it. Elisa is worried it's more than just a sprain, but fears going to a doctor will cost too much money. What would you advise her to do

a. Is Elisa's accident something that is covered by Workers' Comp. or Disability Insurance?

b. What has to happen for Elisa to get insurance benefits?

c. If her boss won't change the way boxes are stored in the inventory room, is there anything that Elisa can do?

d. Should she continue to work there? What should she take into account to make her decision?

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1. How important is it for you to learn more about the following?

	For each line, Please check the box that applies to you			
	Not Important	**A little Important**	**Quite Important**	**Very Important**
a. The kind of help available to workers who are ill or injured so badly off the job that they can't work				
b. What you need to do to protect your rights if you're asked to do a job that is too dangerous				
c. Who to contact to complain about dangerous working conditions the employer won't fix				
d. The invisible dangers of chemicals and pesticides on the job				
e. Talking with co-workers on the job about how to make your jobs safer				
f. Talking with supervisors on the job about how to make your job safer				

5. What would you like to learn about health and safety on the job or in the workplace ?

I want to learn:

LAES

Date: _____

Student Name _____

Teacher Name _____

Module 4:
On-the-Job Health and Safety

Instructions: There are two parts to this post-module activity. The first is a set of problems; the second asks students to reflect on what they have learned from their work on the module.

Part I. A Set of Problem Situations. Students can work individually or in pairs to address it. If in pairs, each person should complete an answer sheet.

Background Problem A: Elisa works in a home-improvement store as an inventory clerk. On Thursday, February 12, in the afternoon, she was stacking boxes of linoleum tiles in the warehouse storeroom when suddenly two of the boxes came falling down. Elisa tried to catch the boxes, and did so, but hurt her wrists in the process because the boxes were much heavier than she believed they would be. She doesn't know precisely what she did to her wrists but they hurt a lot. She had told her supervisor in the hall, the previous week, that she thought the piles of boxes were dangerous, and that she was afraid of an accident, and asked to be transferred to do something safer. The supervisor told her to be more careful, that there hadn't been accidents before if workers were careful; and there wasn't any other job for her to do. So, if she didn't do this job, she'd just have to quit. Since Elisa can't fill in the accident report, she has asked you to do it with her. An accident report is provided on the following page.

◊ *Problem A*: Please complete the accident report on the following page, based on the above description Elisa has provided.

Problem B Background: Elisa tried to go back to work right after the accident, but found that using her hands was too painful. Her supervisor, Jeff, didn't think her injury was serious enough for her to see the company doctor. In fact, Jeff noted that he "really should fire her for not being careful and for creating an accident report that will look badly to their Workers' Comp. Insurance carrier."

- *Problem B*: Please advise Elisa, by answering the questions below:
- Is Elisa's accident something that is covered by Workers' Comp. or Disability Insurance?
- What has to happen for Elisa to get Workers' Comp. or Disability Insurance?
- If Elisa's supervisor refuses to authorize medical treatment for Elisa, what should she do? Should she still go to a doctor? How will the bills get paid?
- If Elisa's boss won't change the way boxes are stored in the inventory room, is there anything that Elisa can do?
- Should Elisa continue to work there? What should she take into account to make her decision?

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Employee Accident Report	
Part below to be completed by Employee:	
Employee Name:	Social Security No.
Position/Title:	Department:
Organization:	Branch Location:
Employee Home Street Address:	
Employee Home Telephone No.:	
Date of Accident:	Time of accident a.m. / p.m.
Location of Accident:	
Description of Accident:	
Description of Injury:	
Received medical treatment at the scene? Y/N	If yes, Name of attending physician?
Sought other medical treatment? Y/N	If yes, Name of attending physician: Name & Address of Health Organization
Employee signature:	Date:
Below to be completed by Immediate Supervisor:	
Date & Time learned of this accident:	
In your opinion, what factors contributed to this accident?	
What actions should be taken to eliminate the safety hazards	
Name, Position/Title:	
Supervisor's signature & date:	

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Part II. Reflection on what <u>You Learned</u> from this Module

1. Did you benefit from your work on this module regarding any of the following?

	Yes/No	Please comment on either: • How you benefited; or • Why you feel this module was not useful for you in this area
a. Ask the questions you need to in order to identify risks involved with a job		
b. Estimate the costs of medical treatment for the kinds of injuries you might experience in your job		
c. Fill out an accident report for your employer or an insurance agency		
d. Communicate with employers and supervisors to help you get your medical bills paid from on-the-job injuries		
e. Communicate with co-workers to identify job safety issues and what to do about them		
f. Your rights if your employer fires you or retaliates against you for reporting unsafe working conditions		
g. the benefits available to workers who are injured on the job or whose health is hurt as a result of working conditions– Workers' Compensation		
h. What an injury is, including both visible and invisible conditions—what Workers' Compensation covers		
i. the benefits available to workers who are injured so badly that they can't work or whose health suffers as a result of work – Disability Insurance		
j. If people who complain about the psychological stresses of their jobs have a real health and safety concern or not		
k. If farmworkers have the same rights as other workers if they're injured on the job or being taken to a job site		
l. your right to a smoke-free workplace.		
m. Your ability to recognize safety and hazard signs		
n. What you can do if you notice unsafe conditions that make your job unacceptably dangerous for you to work at.		

LAES

2. What would you tell another student about this module, if you were asked to describe it, the work you did during it, and what You Learned from it—about your rights and the benefits available to injured workers or about trying to make your job safer by talking with your co-workers or supervisors?

3. What additional information, explanations, or practice do you will need to use what You Learned even better than you can now?

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